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EDU Advocate

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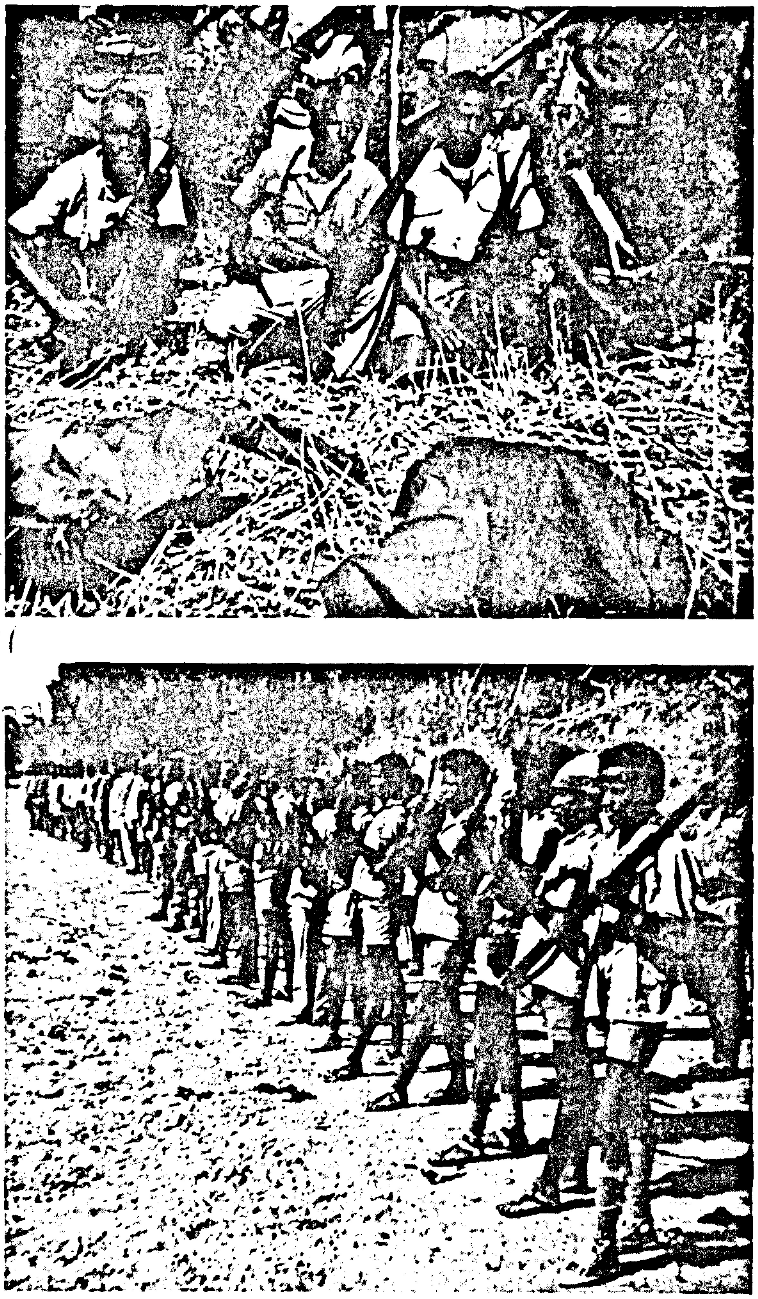
INSTABILITY, KILLINGS INCREASE IN ETHIOPIA

World press reports, and reliable word-of-mouth news reaching foreign capitals, are once again full of news of assassination and killings in Ethiopia, as the grip of the fascist regime begins to collapse.

In late September, in the wake of a wave of wildcat strikes in state-controlled organisations, there was an attempt on the life of the Dergue strongman, Major Mengistu Haile-Mariam, as he was driving through Addis Ababa, in which, it was alleged, he was slightly injured. (That such a brave attempt against this odious dictator could be made despite the extreme mood of terror and repression in Ethiopia shows the true extent of dissatisfaction with the regime.) Predictably, mass arrests and further turmoil followed the attempt, leading to culminating the mysterious assassination on 1st October in an Addis Ababa street of *Fikre Merid,* the number-two man in the spurious "people's organizing provisional office" set up by the junta in an attempt to establish a veneer of civilian authenticity, and the assassination on 8th November, also in an Addis Ababa street, of *Getinet Zewdie,* permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In all, more than 100 people are reported to have been killed in recent weeks in a vicious power struggle now underway within the Dergue and also between the Dergue and its opponents.



Part of Valiant EDU fighting force pictured recently in the field in Ethiopia

Dergue focuses blame on EPRP

If nothing else, the fact that prominent Marxists have been the chief victims of the wave of violence undoubtedly initiated by the Dergue in reprisal for the attempt on Mengistu's life, gives the lie to the regimes's attempt to cloak itself with a Marxist-Leninist mantle. And the regime has in recent weeks unleashed the full fury of its propaganda machinery against the Eithiopian People's Revolutionary Party, a Marxist group which demands an immediate return to civilian rule. Hundreds of EPRP members or sympathizers, including many teachers, have been arrested or executed. The hysterical campaign by the Dergue against the EPRP, which has taken the form of vitriolic statements in the media and staged "demonstrations" in towns and cities, has blamed theEPRP, as well as the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) by name as being responsible for all Ethiopia's ills.

EDU has not found it necessary to reply to these hysterical allegations. However, we did release a statement to the press on 5th October which stated:

"The people of Ethiopia are resolutely fighting against the fascistic dictatorship of the Dergue. Whilst this struggle grows in strength from day to day and will inevitably win victory, anti-democratic elements have recently escalated their activities to include terrorism and assassination in a desperate attempt to arrest the emergence of a democratic state in Ethiopia. Such futile actions, from whatever quarter they come, will have no bearing on the democratic revolution of Ethiopia which swept away the old feudal order.

"The *Ethiopian Democratic Union,* which is intensifying its struggle against the fascist regime, will not put down its arms until democracy is instituted in Ethiopia. In this spirit it condemns terrorism and assassination, as it has always condemned the mass arrests and killings without trial carried out by the Dergue, because of the futility of these criminal acts and their pernicious effect on the genuine democratisation of the nation.

"It is the task of all democratic forces in Ethiopia," the statement concluded, "to unite in their condemnation of terrorism and assassination, and to fight resolutely against the Dergue, which by unleashing vigilante squads throughout the land to kill and maim innocent victims with impunity, and by creating a climate of violence and terror, is ultimately to blame for the desecration of the Ethiopian character evidenced in these killings."

Reports of the grisly extent of the Mysterious Campaign of death underway in Addis Ababa speaks of the remains of 15 bodies being seen in a ditch near the Capital, and another group of 30, whose hands has apparently been bound before they were killed, being found on the outskirts of the city.

Terror campaign documented

A report by EPRP, brought to the attention of *Amnesty International* in London, the *International Commission of Jurists* in Geneva and the *Human Rights Commission* at the United Nations, accused the Dergue of *murdering 1,225 of its opponents* and torturing hundreds more in concentration camps. The report says 20 young people were assassinated in Addis Ababa during August by the junta's murder squads (see "Mass Murder by junta," in *The Guardian,* London, 21 October 1976) and another 25 bodies were found in a shallow ditch, while a group of headless bodies was found near a cave in Jimma in south-western Ethiopia. In Tigrai, the report said, a number of farmers and students, arrested for questioning, were executed en masse under a bridge, and their bodies were burned. There was also a mass slaughter of farmers who had been resisting the new policies of the Dergue in Gojjam, and the officer named in the report as being responsible for their execution was Major Endale Tesemma, a Dergue member.

Citing the case of a Dergue official, Major Tekele Wolde, who was publicly hanged in Sidamo after being accused of killing more than 100 detainees (reported in EDU ADVOCATE Number 3, page 4), the EPRP report says "the junta was forced to sacrifice him because his actions, in accordance with his orders to liquidate peasant activists, caused massive indignation. However, this instance shows that the Dergue's officers are busy killing hundreds of people summarily."

Money changeover fiasco

Meanwhile, troops and tanks had to be moved into strategic positions in Addis Ababa in mid-October to cope with public resistance to the latest example of the Dergue's disastrous mismanagement of economic and fiscal affairs, namely the changeover from the old Ethiopian currency, the dollar, to the new Dergue currency. No one disputes the fact that it was high time to replace the old currency, but the ham-handed way in which the Dergue handled the changeover seemed guaranteed to ensure that the shift would be a typical Dergue fiasco.

The main problem was that, in an alleged attempt to uncover hoarders of money, and implicitly to raise revenue as well, a discount, or "service charge" was applied against the higher-denomination banknotes being brought into banks for exchanging. This meant that a holder of an old E$500 note would be charged 20 per cent of its value, or $100, even though the old dollar and new birr were meant to have par value. More to the point, holders of E$100 and E$50 notes -- and almost every urban Ethiopian has one or the other tucked away as savings -- were charged a "service charge" of 8 per cent, which meant a $100 bill would only be exchanged for 92 birr, and a $50 bill for 46 birr. (Notes of E$20, 10, 5 and 1 will be exchanged later.)

The discount naturally provoked resistance to the change among an already suspicious public, and there was considerable chaos in shops and markets throughout Ethiopia in the aftermath of the changeover. To the Dergue, the most important thing seemed to be to get rid of the image of the banknotes, as if they are still haunted by the late Emperor's spectre. The economic and practical repercussions of the changeover do not seem to have been taken adequately into account.

EDU SPONSORED SURVEY REVEALS MOST DIPLOMATS WANT "TO STAY OUT"

An indirect survey carried out for EDU has conclusively indicated that a statistically significant number of newly-appointed Ambassadors of the Junta would seek political asylum if they were to be recalled back to Ethiopia.

This study has been substantiated by the reluctance of the Dergue not to recall eight Ambassadors who are urgently needed -- according to reliable information -- for home assignments.

The Ministries of Finance, Commerce, Information and National Resources are evidently among governmental departments without ministers.

The same survey revealed that among the qualified junior staff of the Embassies more than half of the interviewed diplomats would rather opt for seeking political asylum in the country of their accreditation than go back at this time. According to one of the vocal subjects interviewed:

"I would rather lose my seniority and become a receptionist than to return to Addis to become a minister of the Foreign Office."

A critic, who for obvious reasons did not want to be quoted, lamented: "the diaspora of brain-drain is agravated by the trigger-happy policy of the Dergue."

EDU FORCES ENGAGE AND DEFEAT DERGUE TROOPS IN MANY DISTRICTS

The fighting forces of EDU have recently taken control of towns and villages in several districts after defeating misguided soldiers from garrisons maintained by the fascist Dergue.

In these engagements, large quantities of arms and ammunition were captured, together with several soldiers who were subsequently absorbed into the EDU resistance forces.

In each case, local villagers have been informed of the aims and objectives of EDU, and have pleged their support to our forces.

Two of the incidents occurred at *Shire in Tigrai* and *Metemma in Begemider.* Prior to overrunning the Dergue garrison in Metemma, EDU's forces clashed with misled soldiers of the Dergue, killing 62 soldiers, against five EDU casualties. Substantial quantities of arms were captured, and soldiers were taken captive, and, after hearing of the objectives of EDU, asked to join our forces.

On hearing of the defeat of its troops, the Dergue ordered its F-5 jets to bombard villages in the region, and many innocent civilians were killed in these raids.

Appeal to members of Air Force

The role of the Air Force is to defend the nation from external enemies. But the members of the Ethiopian air force have fallen into the trap set by the Dergue to kill their own brothers and sisters in bombing raids against civilian targets. An EDU spokesman has already appealed to the air force to refuse to follow the Dergue's orders to carry out these senseless missions against innocent Ethiopians.

Since the Dergue claims to be standing for the people, though it is the people who are fighting against the Dergue, the spokesman appealed to members of the Air Force to side with the people and intensify their opposition to the Dergue.

Situation on the various fronts

Afar: Military co-ordination has been intensified, and Dergue units are being harassed on all fronts in the region. The resistance forces have a strong upper hand in this region.

Wolega: Resistance activities have been re-intensified. The Dergue is having to coerce jobless people in the area with gifts of money to entice them to come out and demonstrate on its behalf -- a testament to the growing success of the resistance in the province.

Eritrea: The Dergue has once again savagely stepped up its offensive against the resistance forces, showing once and for all that it has absolutely no intention of seeking a peaceful solution.

On 12th October, the *Washington Post* correspondent reported from Addia Ababa that all signs now "point towards a probable new escalation in the fighting (in Eritrea) soon and internationalization of the issue, with Ethiopia seeking the support of Black Africa against the Arab world, which it openly accuses of instigating and prolonging the war."

Two weeks later, on 27th October, news agency reports said Eritrean resistance forces were besieging Dergue's position at *Nacfa,* and that the Dergue had "lost at least five planes and 100 men in attempts to reinforce its troops there, who are running out of supplies."

The troops killed were said to belong to the new *Nebelbal* (Flame) Division, which the Dergue has especially trained for the battle against resistance forces throughout Ethiopia.

So, in spite of the total failure of its military operations in Eritrea, the Dergue still refuses to accept that the Eritrean question is a *political* problem which requires a *political solution.*

Dergue forces kill each other

Since, apparently, the Dergue's military post in Tessenie (Eritrea) is encircled and cut-off the Dergue was unable to send in salaries and supplies to the encircled units, and a fatal dispute broke out among the Dergue soldiers.

The Dergue command had radioed instructions for the commander of the encircled garrison to send a convoy to Asmara to collect the supplies, from the Head Quarters of the Second Division, and those who refused to go, saying it was up to the Dergue to send the requirements to the base. In and ensuing shoot-out, 14 soldiers were killed. Those who had refused to go, fled after the shoot-out and took to the bush.

MAJOR VICTORY FOR RESISTANCE AS TOP DERGUE UNIT DEFECTS

The forces of resistance against the fascist Dergue won a major victory very recently, when 41 members of the *Airborne Division,* under the command of Lt. Col. Tesfaye, left their posts in disagreement with the policies of the Dergue, with the intention of joining the forces of the *Ethiopian Democratic Union.*

In great numbers, senior officials of the Dergue, and whole units of the junta's own armed forces, are now abandoning the Dergue and rebelling against its disastrous policies at every opportunity.

According to reports reaching EDU, 80 newly-commissioned police officers — following the precedent set by the airborne division — recently defied the Dergue and fled into the countryside to join the resistance movement.

Like the Ancien Regime, the Dergue refuses to recognize the realities of the day. EDU believes that if they were to hold a referendum, they would not get a *5 per cent* vote of confidence! Even the so-called supporters of the Dergue are no more than people who have been coerced, and who, when they realize the crimes they are committing, are exterminated by the Dergue.

EDU has said that it holds nobody responsible -- *exept the members of the Dergue and the few closely working with them* -- for the atrocities that are being committed against the people of Ethiopia.

EDU is commited to reconciliation, rehabilitation and progress under democracy, and is thus lauching any *vendettas.*

DERGUE BRUTALITY DOCUMENTED IN PEASANT MARCH REPORT

Reports brought back by journalist Jon Swain of the London *Sunday Times*, who was held by forces of the Tigrai Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) for the three months last summer, have documented the barbarity of the Dergue's disastrous "peasant march" on Eritrea last May and June.

The march, involving a conscripted force of 40,000 Ethiopian peasants, who were dispatched at great sacrifice to themselves and to the country in an attempt to defeat the resistance effort now underway in Eritrea, was defeated by the resolute action of resistance forces, including those of the *Ethiopian Democratic Union*, in decisive battles in the province of Tigrai (see "EDU Helps Defeat Peasant March," EDU ADVOCATE Number 3, page 5).

Journalist Swain, who won the British "Reporter of the Year" award for his coverage of the Cambodian civil war in 1975, was with the TPLF forces at the time of the march, and in a report in the *Sunday Times* (12th September 1976), he gave a graphic account of the disastrous peasant march:

"The battle was fought at Zalambesa, a boulder-strewn plain about a day's march away from where I was being held. Later, when I thought I had won the guerrillas' confidence I asked to visit the site, but in vain. I think the guerrillas were genuinely grieved by the colossal slaughter that had taken place.

" 'We did not want to kill these peasants, but the Dergue forced them to attack us and left us no choice," they said.

"It was at the end of May that the decisive battle was fought. For days the Ethiopian army had been bringing up thousands of peasants to Zalambesa in commandeered trucks and buses. It had issued them with ammunition and some food and told them that once inside Eritrea they could plunder, rape and steal.

"Unknown to the peasants and its army escort, headed by Colonel Getahun Egigu, hundreds of guerrillas had occupied the heights around their camp. At dawn, they began to fire down onto the crowd below with mortars, rockets and automatic rifles.

"Waves of them (the peasant army) fell before they could discharge their guns. The remnants turned and ran away. But they were trapped between the guerrilla lines and the *Ethiopian army* which, according to prisoners later interviewed at a prison camp inside Eritrea, now *opened fire* in a callous attempt to drive the rabble forward.

"F-5 Freedom fighters of the Ethiopian air force strafed the guerrilla positions, but to no avail. By four in the afternoon, the plain was still. Guerrillas could be seen picking their way among the bodies, collecting weapons. 'You could not see the ground. You could only see dead bodies,' was how one who participated described the scene.

"No one will ever know the full truth about this battle. But piecing together various accounts, it seems 500 peasants were taken prisoner and well over 1,000 killed."

This tragic account testifies to how the Dergue had to open fire on its own "troops" to force them to almost certain death, grievous injury or captivity.

Released prisoners killed

As if this were not testimony enough to the cruelty and barbarity of the Dergue, an EDU report later confirmed by the world press, reports some of the peasant marchers captured at the time of that battle, and later released on humanitarian grounds by the resistance forces, were subsequently killed by the Dergue.

According to these reports, an Eritrean Official, Dr. Habte Tesfamarian, was sent to Geneva in October to inform the International Red Cross that the Eritrean Liberation Front can no longer support the 800 prisoners taken during the attempted invasion of Eritrea by the Dergue's "peasant army."

Dr. Habte said the Eritrean forces had recently released some 250 of the peasant prisoners after educating them about the Eritrean cause. The released prisoners, he said, were killed by the Dergue.

The ELF has had no reply from the Dergue to its call for an exchange of its remaining prisoners for the estimated 1,000 Eritrean prisoners held by the Dergue. D. Habte said there were now over 800,000 people in Eritrea displaced by the fighting, apart from some 100,000 Eritreans who have fled into Sudan. He accused the Dergue of carrying out a "scorched-earth policy" in Eritrea.

MORE DEFECTIONS FROM DERGUE

More senior Ethiopian officials, civilian and military, have defected from the disastrous rule of the fascist Dergue.

They include:

Col. Fikru Endale, according to reports reaching our news desk, fled in opposition of the justa, to Germany with S2 million of the new currency. He was deputy commander of the Dergue's newly-created *Nebelbal* Division. The same sources reports that Capt. Abebe, a member of the Ethiopian delegation to the recent Non-Aligned summit conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, who is now believed to be in Germany;

Ato Gebre-Tensae Adhanom, Charge d'Affaires at the Ethiopian embassy in Ankara, Turkey, is reported to have defected. He has apparently decided not to return to Addis Ababa.

Visitors

Recent Ethiopian visitors to London included *Lt. Col. Tekka Ganno,* a member of the Dergue and chairman of its security committee, who was on a secret visit, accompanied by *Col. Seyoum Makonnen* of the security department.

EDU PREPARES POLICY DECLARATION AND REVIEW OF 'STATE OF THE NATION'

The *Ethiopian Democratic Union* had recently published two key documents outlining its aims and objectives, and its plans for removing the fascist Dergue.

One, in the form of a "platform" is called *"EDU: What Does It Stand For, Who is Behind It, What After the Dergue?"* The seven-page document explains EDU's role as a broad front of forces "pledged to establish a democratic state with civil rights in Ethiopia." It explains exactly what EDU stands for (democracy and delvolution to a federal system), details EDU'S firm commitment to land reform as "the key to a resolution of the inequities and indignities inherent in the former feudal system," broadly outlines EDU's economic approach and discloses who is behind EDU. It also gives a specific account of how EDU plans to remove the Dergue from power (by military and political means), and gives a precise breakdown, in the form of a 13-point programme, of the steps EDU will take after the removal of the Dergue from power.

The other document is *"Ethipia: The State of the Nation,"* an exhautive 13 page report updating an earlier study of the same name, excerpts from which have been published in previous issues of the EDU ADVOCATE. Offering itself as an overview of the political situation in Ethiopia and the role of EDU, it provides a penetrating analysis of the attitudes of the Ethiopian people to the changes which have been imposed by the Dergue, the role of the resistance movements, the Dergue's relationship with civilian institutions and social groups, the situation within the armed forces, the famine and economic situations, the Dergue's attitude to Christians and Muslims, and the issues of Eritrea, civil strife and coup attempts. It is one of the most comprehensive analyses ever published of the situation in Ethiopia under the Dergue, and we hope to publish further extracts from it in future issues of EDU ADVOCATE.

Both publications are available on request from EDU, BM-EDU, London, WC1V 6XX, England.

ETHIOPIANS PROTEST AT ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Once again the Dergue expended great amounts of money to stage lavish celebrations at its embassies abroad on the occasion of its so-called anniversary on 12th September.

In London, the Council for Civil Liberties in Ethiopia (CCLE) sent a statement to those invited to the anniversary "celebration" urging them to boycott the reception.

The statement pointed out the continuing misery of the people of Ethiopia under the Dergue, including the 4,000-5,000 prisoners under detention.

The statement informed those planning to attend the reception that "Your physical participation will amount to nothing less than aiding and encouraging the fascists to continue to squeeze the last breath of the already sickened and weakened Ethiopians."

Surprising statement

Meanwhile, those unfortunate enough to have to sit through the Dergue's own "celebrations" of their reign of terror in Addis Ababa were astonished when Dergue Chairman Tafari Banti, in his speech, called on the international community to act against "the brutal and wanton murder that South Africa is committing against unarmed and helpless people for asking for their rights as human beings." The words which the speechwriters put in puppet Tafari's mouth were true enough as regards South Africa, but seem also to be uncomfortably applicable to the Dergue's Ethiopia as well.

POINTS TO PONDER

The United States Congress may force the Administration to cut off American aid to 19 dictatorial regimes around the world, including Ethiopia.

Senator Hubert Humphrey, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee's subcommittee on foreign assistance, has asked the State Department to file a report on the countries, including Ethiopia, "which have been mentioned most frequently as having questionable human rights practices." The reports would be studied by Congress before it is agreed to grant further U.S. aid to the countries in question.

The Dergue has asked the 100-plus foreign Embassies in Addis Ababa to allow their diplomatic pouches to be searched, in an apparent attempt to stop the flow of anti-Dergue material into Ethiopia. It is considered doubtful that many of the Embassies will comply with this unprecendentedly undiplomatic request.

The top members of the Dergue, including Tafari, Mengistu and Atnafu, are now living in the Grand Palace in Addis Ababa, rather than in the headquarters of the Fourth Division as before. Reason: they are afraid of being assassinated on their way to and from their living quarters, and even fear their own troops living at Fourth Division HQ.

For the record

What was that top-level Russian military delegation led by deputy defence minister -- in civilian clothes, of course -- doing on a secret visit to Addis Ababa recently?
According to reliable information a Dergue mission is to visit Moscow soon.

The Dergue continues to make foreign enemies, and among close neighbours at that. The Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) recently protested that Ethiopian gunboats had twice invaded Yemeni territorial waters in the Red Sea. On one occasion, according to Sana Radio, an Ethiopian gunboat intercepted a Yemeni sailing boat carrying cargo from Djibouti and forced it to sail to Assab. On the other occasion, a Dergue gunboat arrested three Yemeni fishermen.

The YAR lodged a fomal diplomatic protest with the Dergue embassy in Sana, informed the United Nations, and issued a statement that "the YAR does not want to see the southern part of the Red Sea transformed into an area of tension. This will not benefit the peoples of the area; in fact it will expose the safety and security of these peoples to danger and drive them into conflict. The countries of the world must perform their duties in the face of such irresponsible actions and must not allow matters to develop in such a way that they will stand in the way of any just and peaceful solution of the problem."

EDU was favourably cited in the October issue of the Paris-based magazine *Topafrica* (Number 18), in an article on Ethiopia titled "Hopes dashed." The article spoke of EDU's role in organizing resistance to the Dergue in Gojjam, Begemder, Tigrai and Bale, and said: "EDU has as its objective putting and end to the dictatorship of the Dergue, and moving towards popular consultation to decide future institutions on a democratic basis. Judging from the strength of its forces, it well seems that this group is the best-organized force in opposition to the regime, and that it will be called upon to play a major role in the future."

EDITORIAL

Fascism Under Crisis

The struggle to remove the Dergue from power and establish a democratic state in Ethiopia is gaining momentum daily.

As a result of this growth in strength of the democratic forces in Ethiopia, the pretensions of the banner of "Ethiopia First" and "Ethiopian Socialism" have been irreversibly frustrated. Thus, the ensuing isolation of the regime from the people is making its survival increasingly more dependent on the use of the coercive powers of the state machinery.

Parallel to this, the split within the military-bureaucratic oligarchy led by the Dergue has reached the stage of assassinations and counter-coup attempts. In this dog-fight between what appear to be the left and right wings of the fascist regime, the different state apparatuses under the control of each side are being deployed.

Though the regime is attempting to hide the nature and extent of its crisis, it is uncontestable that the events of recent weeks mark a major turning point in what is bound to be its brief existence.

Thus it is to be expected that there will continue to be more assassinations and counter-coup attempts. However, these attempts cannot solve the fundamental political problems facing the country, since military government, whatever its colour, is totally unacceptable to the Ethiopian people, who are engaged in a resolute struggle to establish a democratic state in Ethiopia.

At the time of going to print the EDU ADVOCATE learned that the blood thirsty military junta randomly killed 27 Ethiopians who have alleged to have peacfully opposed the opression.

In past issues of the EDU ADVOCATE, we have included a form for prospective subscribers to sign up for subscriptions. The response has been encouraging, but we still have not received replies from all the hundreds of people to whom we have been sending copies of the EDU ADVOCATE. We are sending this issue to our full mailing list, whether the recipients have returned their subscription forms or not. Due to the heavy cost of printing and mailing the EDU ADVOCATE, we will not be able to continue this practice forever. We therefore urge all those receiving this issue, who have not so far signed on as subscribers to the EDU ADVOCATE, to return the form below, with your contribution, so that we may continue sending you the EDU ADVOCATE and related publications. If you cannot subscribe for the full amount, please give as much as you can, and consider it a small contribution to the free and democratic future of Ethiopia. Others are sacrificing daily to ensure our victory. Will you do your part?

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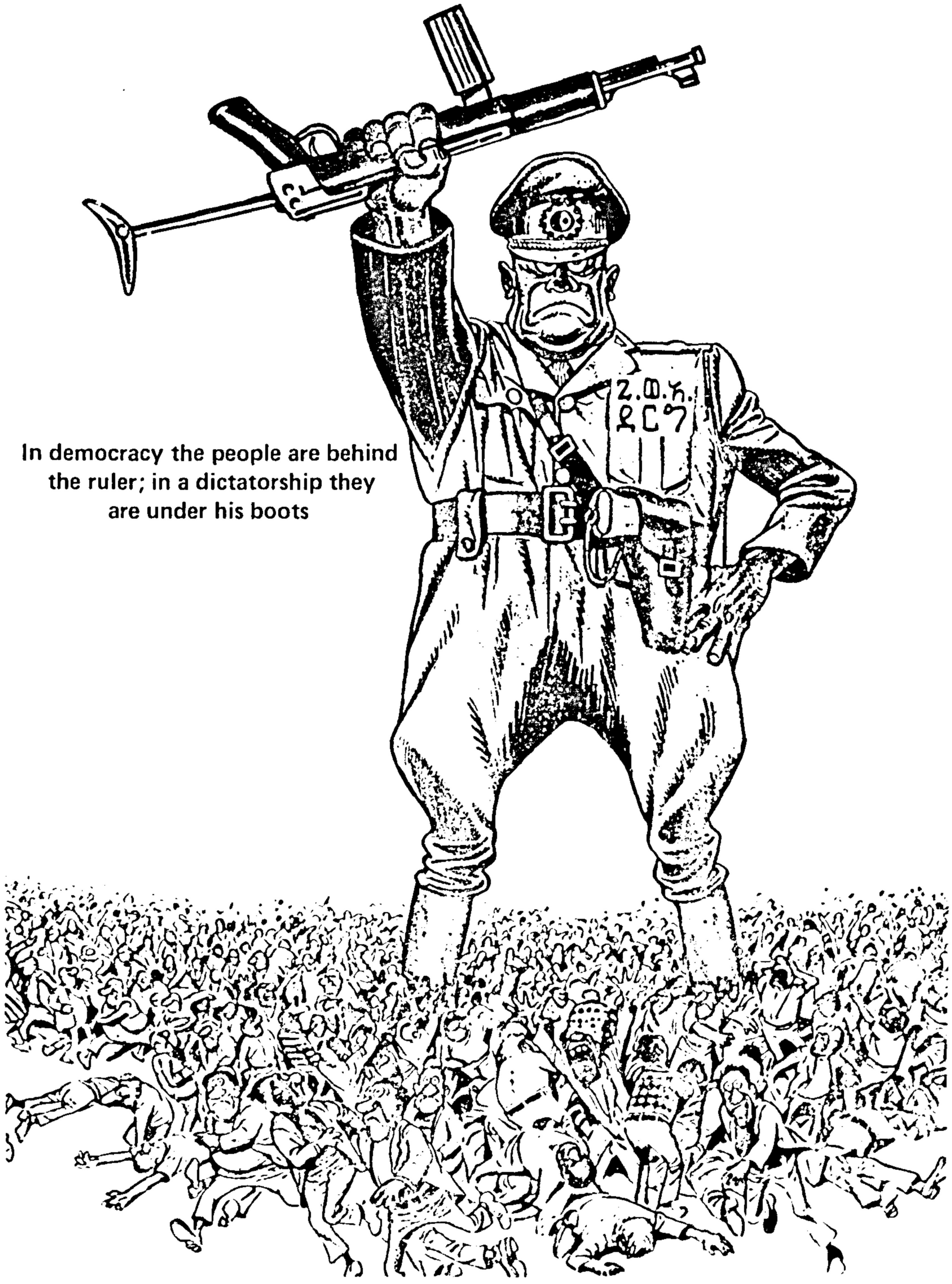

In democracy the people are behind the ruler; in a dictatorship they are under his boots

Ethiopian students in the U.K. recently held a sit-in demonstration at the Dergue Embassy in London in protest against the fascist regime's trigger-happy policy.

The demonstration, which lasted over 3 days, clearly manifested the student's concern over the arbitrary arrests and want on killings by the regime of all progressive forces inside Ethiopia who seek for democratisation of the state.

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EDU Advocate

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EDU WINS IMPORTANT VICTORY AS BATTLE AGAINST DERGUE INTENSIFIES

The armed forces of the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), have scored major victories against the illegal regime of the Dergue in the first weeks of 1977.

A vigorous offensive by thousands of well-armed resistance fighters has been underway for several months in the regions of Begemder, Tigrai, Afar and other parts of Ethiopia. The success of the resistance fighters in capturing major towns and roads and in defeating the garrisons of the Dergue occupation, has been boosted further by the joining of patriotic soldiers from the ranks of the Dergue's army.

Girls joined EDU fighting forces in Humera.

On 13 January, the town of Humera, in the Province of Begemder and near the Sudanese frontier, was seized by the combined resistance forces after the army defected to EDU fighters. During the attack, hundreds of rankandfile joined the resistance forces.

Seventeen Year old Girl with a Thompson and sparkling eye of hope for coming freedom.

The fall of Humera was doubly significant because it marked the first time the Dergue has admitted defeat to the growing resistance movement. A broadcast by Addis Ababa Radio on 19 January stated that the Commander of the Fourth Infantry Battalion in Humera, Lt-Col. Fisseha Gebre Wubet, had given himself up to EDU together with many of his men numbering 450.

The Town of Kerora

Humera was the latest northern town to be captured by resistance forces in January. Earlier, liberation forces took the town of Kerora, forcing the 96-man Dergue force stationed there to flee across the border into Sudan, led by their commander, Capt. Abebe Chire. Despite a new level of bitterness in relations between President Numayri's Government and the Dergue, the Sudanese welcomed the Ethiopian deserters cordially and afforded them courteous treatment. Capt. Abebe was quoted as saying he and his men were afraid they would be executed by the Dergue if they were returned to Ethiopia.

Besides the capture of Kerora, recently, resistance forces have kept up their siege of another town, Naqfa, where a 100-man Dergue garrison has been pinned down for more than a month. Films of the siege and bombardment of the deserted Eritrean town were shown on British television on 20 January.

The Ethiopian Democratic Union Forces in Position.

Capture of Metemma-Gondar road

EDU's armed forces scored another major blow against the Dergue on 14 January with an attack on a convoy of Ethiopian troops on the road between Metemma and Gondar, in Begemder province. The Dergue troops were travelling in four armoured personnel carriers, which were destroyed by our freedom fighters, killing the 80 Dergue troops inside. Following this incident, which was widely reported in the world press, EDU freedom fighters took control of the Metamma-Gondar road, adding further territory to the vast areas of northern Ethiopia controlled by the resistance forces.

Since the start of the offensive by freedom fighters in the northern regions, the ranks of the resistance have been swelled by wholesale defections of hundreds of oppressed soldiers of the armed forces, the police and the militia from the ranks of the criminal Dergue. These soldiers, realising the error of the Dergue's brutal policies and longing to make a contribution to the real liberation of Ethiopia, have deserted en masse to sign up with the resistance forces. As a result, our freedom fighters have gained greatly from the military equipment, supplies and training these previously-misguided soldiers have brought with them to our cause. Within the past two months, the number of these soldiers who have shifted their allegiance to the true cause of freedom has reached more than 1,000. They include many senior-ranking officers.

Fighting elsewhere

The gallant action of the resistance forces has not been confined to the northern regions of Ethiopia. In the south, southeast and southwest, freedom fighters have also been on the move. There has been heavy fighting around the town of Imi in the southeast and Dergue forces have suffered heavy losses. In Sidamo and Gamu-Gofa, EDU resistance forces have clashed with the Dergue, killing 27 soldiers and capturing arms and ammunition. In Wollo, the state farm at Chaffa was captured and eventually was burned by the troops of the Dergue during the retreat.

The Dergue faces defeat in North of Ethiopia (Eritrea)

According to the world media, the resistance forces in Eritrea, since the start of a major offensive in November, have acquired control of 90 per cent of the territory of Eritrea, and the whole Eritrean population is now united in a struggle against the Dergue.

In addition to the capture of Keroro and the siege of Naqfa, heavy losses have also been inflicted on Dergue troops at Karen, Adi Kayh, Senafe and Keskese. Over 1,000 Dergue troops have been killed, and several US-made fighter aircraft have been destroyed, since the start of the recent offensive. Another major blow against the Dergue was the destruction of the Agip oil depot at Massawa on 31 December, which destroyed 100,000 litres of petrol.

DEVASTATING NEW FAMINE FEARED

DERGUE INCOMPETENCE AND MISMANGEMENT IN FACE OF DROUGHT

There are growing fears of a major new famine disaster in north-eastern Ethiopia. The natural causes are irregular rain fall, hailstorms and subsequent crop failure particularly in parts of Wollo and Tigrai, where yields are said to be down by between five and twenty per cent. But the unnatural - and unforgiveable - causes are the incompetence and mismanagement of the situation by the Dergue, partly through their lack of willingness to co-operate fully with relief organisations, and mainly through their brutally repressive measures which have alienated the very people they claim to have as their supporters - the farmers and peasant workers.

According to a Reuter report in mid-December, aid workers from foreign relief organisations say there have been "snags" (such people have to be careful how they phrase things!) in making contingency plans for bringing food into the country to meet a nationwide deficit put officially at 200,000 tons. One aid worker added: "Further delays will cost lives."

The report said urgent measures would be needed to meet the deficiency, and there was probably enough food in Wollo and Tigrai only to last to the end of January. If the little rains failed, Ethiopia could be "in big trouble by June and July."

A few days later, the Dergue controlled Addis Zemen admitted that food shortages were anticipated, and urged peasants to increase their agricultural produce. Once again the paper blamed "greedy merchants and individuals" - - instead of acknowledging the total mismanagement of Ethiopia's agricultural affairs by the military junta. How can farmers and peasants get on with their job when they are constantly hounded by the Dergue's bands of bullies, and refused the very tools and seeds with which to produce their crops?

The most frightening statistics to emerge officially so far, however, came in a report on Addis Ababa Radio on January 7 in which it was revealed that about 700,000 people stricken by drought in Wollo and Tigrai had been told to stay put until they are supplied with famine relief. So although the Dergue knew in mid-December, on their own admission, that crops had failed and that thousands would starve, weeks later they are still telling the hungry people of Wollo and Tigrai to wait for supplies.

The Dergue cannot be blamed for drought and crop failure. They can be blamed for creating a climate of fear and oppression which has led to widespread disruption of the means of supply and distribution; for forcing desperate people to take desperate measures of non-cooperation and sabotage; and for acts of sheer incompetence and stupidity - - such as taking thousands of peasants away from the land for the abortive and bloody so-called "peasant march" on non-existent foreign invaders.

And it is surely the ultimate indictment that at a time when there is a worldwide shortage of coffee, Ethiopia, motherland of this beverage, whose province of Kaffa gave the world its name, should not be in a position to take advantage of the situation. Far from it. Ethiopia, under the Dergue, is even having to import maize from Kenya!

The fascist military rulers in Addis Ababa are murdering Ethiopia's economy just as surely as they are murdering her people.

PRO-EDU DEMONSTRATORS GUNNED DOWN BY DERGUE

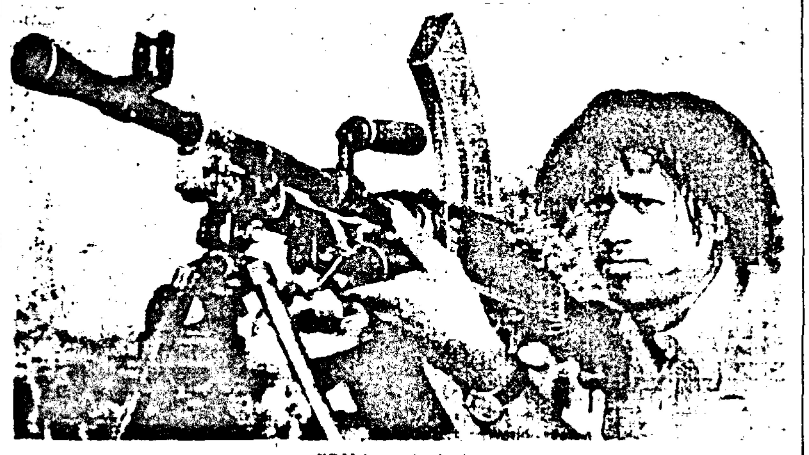
The brutal ruling clique in Addis Ababa have once again proved that they will go to any extreme to try to stop the rising tide of popular resistance to their disastrous policies.

This was the lesson of the tragic incident at Gondar on 8 December, when Dergue "security forces" shot dead more than 30 people, most of them students, who were demonstrating in favour of EDU. The true significance of the Gondar incident was that the Dergue had intended to stage the demonstration in the first place in support of their own policies and against the EDU. The progressive and ever-dedicated students, seeing the opportunity to strike a decisive blow against the Dergue's anti-people pretensions, pretended to go along with the fake demonstration, and then, once it was underway, turned their placards around and reversed their slogans in ringing condemnation of the Dergue, and demanding a democratic, civilian government. Faced with this affront, similar to the tactics used by anti-Dergue demonstrators on an earlier fake march on 1 May 1976 - the Dergue troops could think of no other recourse than to open fire on the demonstrators, killing at least 30 of them and wounding many more. In doing so, the Dergue only proved the point that the demonstrators were making, but by that time, it was tragically too late for many of our dedicated supporters who had paid the ultimate price for their resistance to tyranny. To cap it all off, the Dergue, having displayed such callous brutality to the world, then proceeded to give credit to our cause by blaming EDU in its own official statement about the incident!

As our struggle intensifies and gains in strength, we shall not forget the sacrifices of our young partisans in Gondar and other parts of Ethiopia.

Staged demonstrations used by Dergue

In a last-ditch attempt to extract support from an alienated and oppressed populace, the Dergue has repeatedly been staging phcney demonstrations in alleged support of its policies in various towns in Ethiopia. No one is fooled by this desperate farce. One story popular at the moment in Ethiopia has Mengistu asking his puppet civilian "adviser" Hailu Fida "What did you think of that spontaneous demonstration that the people staged in Harar?", to which Hailu Fida replies: "Shhh! We're not supposed to talk about that. It was a rehearsal for tomorrow afternoon's spontaneous demonstration!"



EDU forces in Action.

NUMAYRI THREATENS WAR AGAINST DERGUE

The vigilant freedom fighters of the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) scored a major diplomatic blow against the fascist Dergue in recent weeks, revealing to the world the aggressive designs of the illegal regime in Addis Ababa against its neighbours. The incident has had world-wide repercussions.

After the failure of an abortive coup against him, President Numayri had accused the Dergue of training anti-Sudanese forces, and charged that some of those responsible for the coup attempt were Ethiopians.

President Numayri on 26 December was able publicly to accuse the Dergue of interfering in Sudanese affairs. Then, in a speech marking Sudan's 21st independence anniversary on 1 January, 1977, Numayri accused the Dergue of "harbouring and training Sudanese dissidents who want to invade the country." He said he had full information about military camps built by the Dergue along Sudan's eastern borders. He said the Dergue, "pushed by despair, was trying to solve its internal problems by creating external battles."

Numayri also accused the Dergue of harassing Sudanese diplomats, and demanded that the headquarters of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) be removed from Addis Ababa.

His speech was followed by vigorous condemnations of the Dergue from the Sudanese People's Assembly, from Sudanese newspapers and from religious leaders. Khartoum newspapers spoke of the "stupidities of the Ethiopian military regime, which is falling apart". The people's assembly called on the Sudanese people to be vigilant against outside conspiracies. The General Federation of Sudanese Workers' Unions condemned the "provocations of the Dergue Regime". At the height of the crisis, Sudan and the Dergue recalled their ambassadors from each other's capitals, and Sudan Airways suspended flights to and from Addis Ababa. More important, President Numayri turned to his allies in the Red Sea region, who are equally concerned with the excesses, brutality and instability of the Dergue, and the defence pact signed last July between Sudan and Egypt was put into full effect in a declaration signed in Cairo by the Sudanese and Egyptian War Ministers; Saudi Arabia is also a party to this pact. It was also agreed that President Numayri would hold summit talks with the Presidents of Egypt and Syria in Khartoum in February.

Town of Humera under EDU control.

EDU forces celebrate Re-Union with their Army Brothers.

CHILDREN MURDERED IN LATEST DERGUE EXECUTIONS

The toll of official murders by the Dergue's puppet special courts continues to grow. In one month alone, November, the butchers of the PMAC shamelessly admitted killing 50 people - some of them a mere fourteen years old. It's often been said that the revolution in Ethiopia is devouring its own children. Now it is doing so literally.

On 2 November, a statement from the Dergue announced that 23 people had been executed. At so called general courts martial they were accused of a number of crimes - but no details of actual charges have ever been made public. Later that month, on 18 November, Addis Ababa Radio announced that 27 people had been executed. Newspapers have spoken of "Mass executions in Ethiopia" and "... a steadily increasing death toll." Again no details of charges were disclosed, but in the case of the second outrage, it has emerged that many of those murdered by the Dergue were supporters of EDU - brave Ethiopians whose only "crime" was to support the cause of freedom and justice in a land of arrest without charge, secret trial and sudden death at the hands of official murderers.

But these announcements tell only a small part of the terrible story of suffering. According to a report in the London Observer on 12 December, some of the 50 people executed during November were "only fourteen years old and their only crime was being found in possession of opposition leaflets or taking part in demonstrations". Is this the freedom which the revolution promised? According to news reaching EDU the officially recorded toll of executions since the Dergue came to power is in the thousands.

"Behind the official figures lie a whole range of deaths and and disappearances which have led to an atmosphere of fear and suspicion among many ordinary Ethiopians."

As they are proving daily, the forces of EDU will not stand by while the fascist butchers of the PMAC wipe out the innocent and the children of our beloved Ethiopia.

It is also interesting to note that an appeal for help has been launched by the Council for Civil Liberties in Ethiopia. The council reports that in one prison in Addis Ababa alone, the number of prisoners has doubled in the past six months from 3,000 to more than 6,000. Detention camps have also been set up in open fields surrounded by barbed wire to house the growing number of prisoners.

Every day in Ethiopia, an innocent man, woman or child is either officially executed, shot dead in the street or in their home, or dragged off to appalling prison conditions - just because they wish to be free.

One of the many fighting girls in EDU forces.

TERROR, ASSASSINATIONS ESCALATE

The Nebelbal death squad created by the Dergue to wipe out the conscious populace of Ethiopia has been unleashed with full fury in recent weeks, and has claimed hundreds of victims in its Gestapo-like terror raids.

Latest victims of the dreaded "flame" division, according to reports reaching EDU, have been two leading academics, Dr. Eshetu Chole and Bahru Zewdie. Eshetu had been in and out of prison since the revolution began, and had at one point even fled to exile in a neighbouring territory, only to decide to return to Addis Ababa, when he was immediately picked up again. Bahru had just finished his PhD in London last summer and had returned home to take up a post as a teacher. Both men, as Marxists, presumably felt the so-called "Marxist" regime would welcome their talents. They unfortunately failed to recognise the fascist reality hiding behind the phoney Marxist facade, and, from the reports we have, paid the ultimate price.

The two are among an estimated 1,500 Ethiopians to be wiped out by the Dergue's terror squads in recent months. We receive a depressing catalogue of reports of students being gunned down in their homes, of sudden killings in the streets of the capital, of the slaughter of 17 students in a bar in Addis Ababa and of another ten elsewhere in the city. In the countryside, peasants who resist the Dergue's drastic measures are systematically eliminated. Everywhere, anyone showing a reluctance to knuckle under to the Dergue, is imprisoned and tortured or simply killed on the spot. Travellers from Addis Ababa report that the reign of terror has created a climate of fear and terror in the city, and armed troops are once again posted on street corners in their tanks and personnel carriers, training machine guns on innocent people trying to go about their daily business. An overnight curfew is in effect, and the capital is sealed off by a tight ring of security checkpoints on all roads leading in from the countryside.

Oh, Ethiopia, such is the freedom, justice and dignity which you have been struggling for three years now to secure!

House-to-House searches

The Nazi SS-type activities of "Nebelbal" extend also to house-to-house searches for weapons and other "subversive" materials. Such searches were actually institutionalised by a Dergue proclamation on 23 November, which said the measures were to "safeguard the lives and well-being of the people". People were also encouraged to collaborate with the shock troops in uncovering caches of arms - no doubt for handsome rewards. The widespread searches often carried out with brutality, caused such a public outcry that the Dergue had to back down and "temporarily" suspend them on 11 January.

Prison death for advocate of justice

Shibru Seifu was a distringuished lawyer who believed in one thing: justice. For that, he was killed by the Dergue. Outspoken in favour of the rule of law since the beginning of the Ethiopian revolution, Shibru Seifu ended up in one of the Dergue's prisons. His only crime had been to insist that justice should be done in all cases, including those of some of the Dergue's "political prisoners." For this, he was beaten fatally in prison, and died later in hospital. A former student president of the University in Addis, he was in his 30's.

Mother of rebel soldier imprisoned

Another recent detainee of the Dergue was a Woizero Romaneworq, whose only "crime" was to be the mother of Lt-Col. Alemayehu Asfaw, the airborne division commander who recently defected with 80 of his commandos.

Foreigners also fall victim to Dergue

The Dergue's terror tactics have even extended to foreigners who have nothing to do with developments in Ethiopia.

On 20 December, an elderly Italian industrialist resident for many years in Ethiopia, was killed by Dergue troops at his home in Addis Ababa. The man, Nello Bernardini, was allegedly being "summoned" by the Dergue police, over an alledged dispute with his employees. The police, claiming Bernardini had fired at them, opened fire on the house, killing him.

Earlier, an African diplomat stationed in Addis Ababa had been shot and wounded by police, who apparently mistook him for an "adhari."

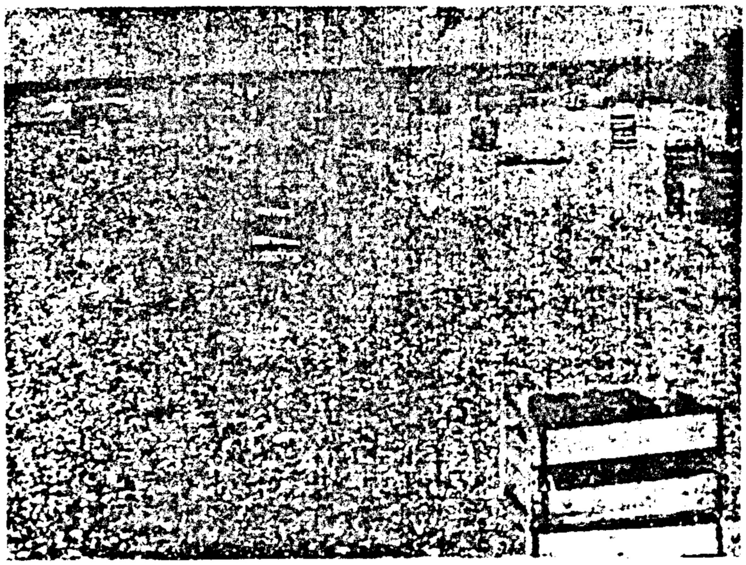
Young students in Training

EDU PAMPHLET PUBLISHED, DISTRIBUTED

The EDU pamphlet, "EDU: What does it stand for? Who is behind it? What after the Dergue?", first published in English late last year, has now been published in Amharic, and thousands of copies of it have been distributed in Ethiopia.

The pamphlet, which clearly defines EDU's policies and positions on the crucial issues confronting Ethiopia, and sets out the guidelines for EDU's struggle and the goals it aims to achieve on returning power to the people in Ethiopia, has proved a highly-popular and successful document. It has contributed to a greater understanding, both among our friends and supporters, and among those who have in the past misinterpreted our struggle, of the whys and wherefores of our growing organisation.

Copies of the pamphlet, in English or Amharic, are always available on request. An Amharic newspaper, Netsannet ("Freedom") has also been started by EDU, and is being distributed regularly in Ethiopia.



HUMERA Airport under EDU control

EDU CHAIRMAN INTERVIEWED BY GERMAN RADIO

The Chairman of the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), Lt.-Gen. Iyassu Mengesha, was recently interviewed by the external service of the West German radio, Deutsche Welle. The interview was broadcast throughout the world, and was heard clearly in Ethiopia, in three languages: German, English and French.

In the interview, the Chairman said EDU "stands for the sovereignty of the people, which has to be realised in the creation of a democratic state in Ethiopia."

He went on: "As such, it belongs to the mainstream of the public uprisings on 1974, which created the conditions for the collapse of the ancient regime. For this reason, it is the largest opposition force in the country, with an armed presence in four provinces. Additionally, EDU has a wide political acceptance and following throughout the country, including that silent majority which dislikes the Dergue and is increasingly getting restive ....The broad base of EDU is the peasantry. Its leadership and exponents are composed of the middle class, small and big businessmen, radical and progressive democrats, modern as well as traditional leaders."

The Chairman made it clear that the "traditional" leaders within EDU's ranks are personalities accepted by the peasantry because they are regarded as representatives of their localities and regions."

The General said EDU believes that the Dergue's dictatorship can only be removed "by a concerted political and military struggle. EDU is already doing this." He said "we are convinced EDU is in the process of fulfilling the wishes of the Ethiopian people. The Dergue's attempt to present EDU variously as monarchist, feudalist, reactionary, and at times even as socialists, has failed to a large measure despite its propaganda monopoly, as people have become aware that feudalism is dead and that EDU is a democratic movement. The attempt of the Dergue to raise the ghost of feudalism is understood by most people to be a diversionary tactic to hide the true nature of the fascist regime."

On Eritrea, Gen. Iyassu said EDU believes in a peaceful solution. "The war in Eritrea should be stopped and negotiations should be opened on the basis of recognition of the rights of the Eritrean people to determine their own destiny democratically, and of the interests of Ethiopia."

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DERGUE SIEZES FULL POWER IN 'REORGANISTION'

Laying to rest once and for all its long-time pretensions about eventually handling over power to civilians, the criminal and illegal Dergue on 30 December "reorganised" itself into an inexplicable style of hierarchy taking over all the powers formerly delegated to civilians.

Under the new set-up, the so-called Provisional Military Administrative Council (which is growing less "provisional" with every passing day) was restructured into three bodies: a "Congress" consisting of all members of the Dergue (now estimated at between 60 and 80); a "Central Committee" of 40 members to be elected from among the members of the Dergue; and a Standing Committee of 17 members, also "elected" from among the Dergue Clique.

The Congress is to be responsible for "internal and external policy directives", budgets and development plans and defence and security. This unwieldy committee also carries out most of the functions of a head of state and can issue directives on political matters.

The Central Committee is to see that the policies decided by the Congress are carried out and also looks after diplomatic affairs.

The Standing Committee is the hard core who actually take day-to-day decisions on political, military, defence, economic and diplomatic affairs.

The Dergue Chairman, and First and Second Vice-chairmen were given specific powers under the reorganisation, indicating that it is the culmination of a long and bitter power struggle, still apparently unresolved. The civilian "council of ministers", already a dead letter under the iron grip of the Dergue's rule, was further written out of the picture, and had the further misfortune of being put under the chairmanship of the fanatical and naive Mengistu.

It is hard to see how this ponderous bureaucracy, so typical of authoritarian regimes, will in any way streamline government in Ethiopia.

Worse than that, it is an open betrayal of the people's yearning for popular civilian rule. The Dergue has siezed full power and obviously intends to hang onto it for as long as it can. The people must see to it that that is not very long.

Rising stars

The Dergue's "reorganisation" also drew attention to the two latest rising stars in the Dergue's theatre of the absurd. They are Captain Alemayehu Haile, who was made "secretary-general" of the PMAC - whatever that means - and Major Moges Wolde-Michael, who was given responsibility for administrative and foreign affairs.

Politburo superseded

The neatest political trick of the "reorganisation" sham was the way the new Dergue structure completely superseded the role of the so-called "Peoples Provisional Office for Mass Organisational Affairs" - better-known as Hailu Fida's "politburo." If these crafty politicians, who flocked back to Ethiopia to become political advisors to the fascist clique, thought they were actually on the road to power and glory, they have been foiled once and for all. The "powers" of the politburo were completely swallowed up in the new re-structuring, leaving Hailu Fida and his opportunist clique as bureaucrats without a bureau. We hardly mourn the demise of these fake revolutionaries.

INCIDENT AT FIUMINCINO AS DERGUISTS DEFECT

An embarrassing and potentially dangerous incident occurred recently at Rome's Fiumicino airport when three Dergue members - - a major, a captain and a lieutenant - - on their way back to Ethiopia from a conference in Bulgaria, sought political asylum in Italy.

When the three Dergue officers, the latest of many to try to escape from the death-like grip of the Addis Ababa junta, tried to make their break, during a stopover at Rome to change planes, they were accosted by an Ethiopian Airlines security officer, who aimed a gun at them. Before he had a chance to do anything foolish, the alert Italian carbinieri on duty at the airport intervened, and whisked the officers away into custody and asylum. The security officer, Major Yilma Kebbede, was detained on his return to Ethiopia.

MENGISTU PORTRAYED IN WORLD PRESS AS BUTCHER

The brutal and bloodthirsty personality of the Dergue strongman, Lt-Col. (as he recently promoted himself) Mengistu is being increasingly reported in the world press. A recent article in Newsweek (International Edition, 4 October 1976), noting that "mass executions have become a regular occurence under the new regime as the political upheaval continues," described Mengistu as a ruthless killer, and spoke of the antipathy between him and Atnafu.

A profile of Mengistu by a Los Angeles Times correspondent (International Herald Tribune, 31 December 1976), told of an incident last September when "Col. Mengistu calmly drew a revolver at a conference table and shot dead a military colleague whose indecisiveness had displeased him."

EDU forces enjoying the Victory

EDU traditional fighter

POINTS TO PONDER

A recent fire at the railway customs warehouse in Addis Ababa is reported to have caused £5 million worth of damage. Several people, including workers at the warehouse, were arrested.

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Civilians who collaborate with the Dergue are daily learning that it's a risky business. Recently demoted from the ranks of those civilians looked on favourably by the Dergue have been two junior ministers: Tesfaye Tadesse of the Ministry of Information and Fekade Mandefro of ETO - brother of the Dergue's Minister of Defence, Ayalew Mandefro.

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So the Dergue's new money, the "birr" is now universally in circulation, though from what we hear it's still less trusted in some parts of the country than the Maria Teresa dollar or bars of salt! Not surprising, since the only signature on the crisp new notes is that of Teferra Deguefe, former Governor of the National Bank who was a prisoner at the time of the introduction of the new Birr to Ethiopia.

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Some of the new currency notes had obviously passed through someone's hands before going into circulation: thousands of them bear an indelible stamp with the name of an anti-Dergue organisation!

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A depressing, but too true, comment on the times in Ethiopia: "For hundreds of years, the colour of the national dress in Ethiopia has been White. Now, under the Dergue, it's Black."